

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PONTA 00058 111954Z

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E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJ: AZOREAN AUTONOMY

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1. MINISTERIAL POWERS FOR JUNTA: THE DECREE LAW GRANTING THE AZOREAN REGIONAL JUNTA MINISTERIAL POWERS WAS PROMULGATED ON FEBRUARY 3. IT SPECIFICALLY GIVES THE JUNTA THE AUTHORITY TO ISSUE DECREES AND REGULATIONS AND TO EXERCISE THE ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY WHICH MINISTERS ENJOY IN THE AREAS UNDER JURISDICTION OF THE JUNTA. THESE AREAS ARE ECONOMIC COORDINATION, FINANCE, LOCAL ADMINISTRATION, ENVIRONMENT, WELFARE, LABOR, EMIGRATION, EDUCATION, SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, SOCIAL COMMUNICATION, CULTURE, AGRICULTURE, FISHING, INDUSTRY, TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION, COMMERCE AND TOURISM. IN ADDITION THE JUNTA ACQUIRES ALL THE FUNCTIONS PREVIOUSLY EXERCISED BY THE CIVIL GOVERNORS OF THE THREE DISTRICTS AND IS IN CHARGE OF THE "JUNTA GERAIS", THE LOCAL ORGANS OF GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, GOP RESERVED FOR ITSELF THE FOLLOWING AREAS: DEFENSE, SECURITY, JUSTICE, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MONETARY AND FISCAL POLICY, NATIONAL POLICY ON TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION, MAIL, TELECOMMUNICA-
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PAGE 02 PONTA 00058 111954Z

TIONS, METEROLOGY AND THE INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY AND CENSUS. THE

DECREE LAW CHARGES THE JUNTA WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF VOICING AN OPINION ON DECREES AFFECTING THE REGION, OF ESTABLISHING A PLANNING DEPARTMENT AND OF SUBMITTING TO THE GOP A BUDGET FOR THE REGION.

2. STATUTE OF AUTONOMY: THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE HAS COMPLETED THE FINAL VERSION OF THE STATUTE OF AUTONOMY AND THE REGIONAL JUNTA IS PREPARING TO SUBMIT THE STATUTE TO THE GOP FOR APPROVAL IN THE NEAR FUTURE. AZOREAN LEADERS HOPE THE STATUTE WILL BE APPROVED BY THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL, WHICH HAS GRANTED A STATUTE OF AUTONOMY TO MACAU, AND HAS THE AUTHORITY TO MAKE CONSTITUTIONAL LAW. THEY HOPE THE STATUTE CAN BE APPROVED IN TIME SO THAT ELECTIONS TO THE AZOREAN GOVERNMENT CAN BE HELD BEFORE OR CONCURRENTLY WITH THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS. THE FINAL VERSION OF THE STATUTE INTER, ALIA, INCREASES THE DECREE OF AUTONOMY FOR THE AZORES A) BY STRENGTHENING THE AZOREAN GOVERNMENT VIS-A-VIS THE MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC (THE GOP REPRESENTATIVE), B) BY GRANTING THE AZORES MONETARY AUTONOMY, THE DETAILS OF WHICH ARE VAGUE, AND C) BY INCREASING THE AZOREAN ROLE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS THE NEW VERSION OF THE STATUTE GIVES THE AZOREAN GOVERNMENT THE AUTHORITY "TO INTERVENE" IN INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS AFFECTING THE REGION AND TO MAKE ALL INTERNATIONAL CONTRACTS AND ACTS AFFECTING THE REGION. IN ADDITION, THE STATUTE STATES THAT THE AZORES HAVE A 12 MILE TERRITORIAL SEA AND A 200 MILE EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE. THE EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE WILL BE EXTENDED 200 MILES FROM A RECTANGLE DRAWN BETWEEN THE MOST EXTREME POINTS OF THE ARCHIPELAGO.

3. COMMENT: WITH THE PUBLICATION OF THE DECREE LAW GRANTING THE REGIONAL JUNTA MINISTERIAL POWERS THE AZORES HAVE ACHIEVED A SIGNIFICANT DECREE OF AUTONOMY. ALTHOUGH THE LAW GIVES THE JUNTA MORE AUTHORITY THAN IT ORIGINALLY REQUESTED, BOTH THE PPD AND CDS HAVE OBJECTED TO THE CLAUSE WHICH RESERVES TO THE GOP FINANCIAL AND MONETARY POLICY. THEY ARE, HOWEVER, UNLIKELY TO PURSUE THE ISSUE.

4. FOR THE MOST PART AZOREANS CONSIDER THE STATUTE OF AUTONOMY THE MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION. THEY FORESEE A SERIOUS POLITICAL CRISIS IF THE STATUTE IS NOT APPROVED AS SUBMITTED EVEN THOUGH IT WOULD GIVE

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PAGE 03 PONTA 00058 111954Z

THE AZOREAN GOVERNMENT SOME AUTHORITY SIMILAR TO THAT OF A SOVEREIGN STATE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

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